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SUBJECT: UNAMI AND MNF-I BRIEFING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL

11. (U) Summary: As mandated by resolution, the Security Council held a debate April 28 to discuss the United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI), as well as the Multi-National Force in Iraq (MNF-I). Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe briefed for the UN, and painted a largely optimistic picture of the situation in Iraq and the UN's role, observing that the "UN's reputation (in Iraq) is growing." Ambassador Khalilzad briefed on behalf of MNF-I, and noted that Iran's illegal aid to armed groups in Iraq poses a serious threat to Iraqi and multinational forces. The UK, France and Iraq made similar statements calling on Iraq's neighbors to cease interfering in its internal affairs. All Council members applauded UNAMI's increased capability, and many members expressed concern regarding human rights in Iraq, especially Iraqi and Coalition detention centers. Russia and South Africa noted the expectation that the MNF-I mandate will not be renewed, and called for clarity regarding future arrangements. The Russian PermRep also criticized the UN's analysis of the situation in Iraq as selective. End summary.

UN, U.S. BRIEF THE COUNCIL

12. (U) After visiting Baghdad and attending the third expanded ministerial meeting of Iraq and its neighbors on April 22, U/SYG Pascoe told the Security Council that political and security improvements in Iraq have opened a window of opportunity for sustained progress. He called on Iraqi leaders to "maintain that positive momentum and take further steps to resolve other fundamental issues that continue to divide Iraqis." Pascoe said the UN is doing its part, in keeping with its expanded mandate under UNSCR 1770. Its "top priority" is the resolution of disputed internal boundaries. In this regard, it had conducted field visits to several disputed areas and is working to build confidence and momentum among the parties. Other key areas for UNAMI are election preparations, humanitarian assistance to alleviate "the suffering of Iraq's refugees and internally displaced persons," and reporting on human rights. Pascoe said three UNHCR personnel have deployed to Baghdad. Furthermore, the ceiling for UNAMI staff has grown to 140 international staff in Baghdad, and 40 international staff in Irbil. It has also re-established its presence in Basrah, and is considering expanding its presence to Najaf, Ramadi and Kirkuk. In order to assist the UN in this expansion, Pascoe called on states "to provide additional financial and logistical resources for the Mission, including funding for the new integrated United Nations facility in Baghdad, and additional required security arrangements, in particular the provision of additional military advisers to UNAMI."

13. (U) Ambassador Khalilzad spoke on behalf of MNF-I, and agreed with Pascoe that there have been security, political and economic gains. He cautioned that "progress has been uneven in certain fronts, and many challenges remain." MNF-I and UNAMI "must work to sustain the momentum achieved." Security incidents and related violence has decreased, except for a rise during the recent violence in Baghdad and Basrah.

The Ambassador said this violence "highlighted Iran,s destabilizing influence and actions" and noted that Iran,s actions pose a "significant threat to Iraqi and multinational forces and to the stability and sovereignty of Iraq." He also stated that "These transfers of arms are fundamentally inconsistent with the restrictions to such transfers to Iraq adopted by this Council under its Chapter VII authority." An hour later, the Iranian Mission circulated a letter to the Security Council (e-mailed to the Department) that rejected these statements, calling them "unfounded allegations."

COUNCIL MEMBERS, IRAQ REACT

¶4. (U) The majority of member states acknowledged the progress being made, raised concern regarding the recent violence in Baghdad and Basrah, and thanked UNAMI for its efforts. Most members, including Libya, China, Indonesia, Belgium, and France, expressed concern about refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as the human rights of detainees in detention centers. Several countries, including Libya and Panama, called for the legal rights of detainees to be respected "in all detention facilities," a reference to MNF-I detention facilities.

¶5. (U) France, the UK and Iraq all implicitly echoed Ambassador Khalilzad,s criticism of Iran,s actions in Iraq. Ambassador Ripert of France said, "any direct or indirect intervention by a neighboring country in Iraq can only lead to greater instability and risks for all." He also called on more countries to open diplomatic missions in Baghdad. Ambassador Pierce of the UK added "any external links to armed groups in Iraq outside the political process, either through the supply of weapons, training or funding, are unacceptable." Iraqi Ambassador Bayati echoed the Prime

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Minister's call on neighboring countries to prevent terrorist infiltration into Iraq and to block funding for terrorist groups.

¶6. (U) Russian PermRep Churkin gave a noticeably negative intervention, asserting that the recent UNAMI report "objectively reflects the situation in Iraq, although at the same time, despite its minute attention to facts, there is an obvious attempt to tone down or side-step the most acute problems in present day Iraq." He also asked why the UNAMI report no longer addressed the issue of security contractors in Iraq. Churkin expressed Russia,s gratitude for UNAMI,s humanitarian and electoral work, but urged great caution with regard to disputed internal boundaries, especially Kirkuk. Churkin, along with South African PermRep Kumalo, noted that the MNF-I mandate will expire at the end of the year, and asked for greater clarity on future plans. He said many Iraqis consider MNF-I to be "occupying troops" and warned that replacing the MNF-I mandate with a bilateral agreement - in other words, a "mere change of signs" - would not meet with Russian approval. Finally, Churkin and Kumalo reminded the UN that they expected a briefing regarding the Development Fund for Iraq, which Churkin called a "closed and opaque structure."

¶7. (U) Iraqi Ambassador Bayati gave a comprehensive report on the situation in Iraq. He noted the ratification of the Justice and Accountability Law, the General Amnesty Law, and the UN Convention against Corruption. Regarding the recent military operations in Baghdad and Basra, Bayati said "it is a message to all outlaws that they can no longer be above the law - the message reflects the justice and neutrality of the Iraqi Government and its non-sectarian orientation in punishing all outlaws and sustaining those who abide by State law." On the diplomatic front, Bayati said Iraq was looking forward to the International Compact meeting in Stockholm at the end of May, and urged all countries to reopen their embassies in Iraq.
Khalilzad